**Selectboard Meeting Minutes December 30, 2024 Zoom Teleconference 5:30 pm**

**Call to Order**: Rick LaPierre called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Others present: Selectboard member Andrew Baker, Tricia Yacovone-Biagi, and Town Administrator Terry Narkewicz.

A motion was put forth by Andrew to approve the minutes of December 16. This was seconded by Rick. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes; Tricia – abstain. Motion passed 2-0-1.

**Department Liaison Reports:**

**Emergency Management:** EMD Tom Williams is working with Trinity Church to have that organization become a food prep and distribution site in case of emergencies.

**MVP** – Tom Williams, Jeff Johnston, and Tricia spoke with a representative of the state Department of Ecological Restoration (DER) about the culvert near the highway barn. The representative thought there was a solid case for replacing that culvert. The culvert is perched where it discharges into Allen Brook, making it a high priority for repair. The representative said two more culverts, further downstream, could also be added in to a grant application. Tricia would like to pursue this project. Applications are due in February.

**Highway Department** – The crew is handling snow storms and keeping equipment in repair. Other projects are finished for the season. Andrew authorized the Treasurer to allow three hours of overtime for the crew, who had been called out on Christmas day. Crew members left two hours early on Christmas Eve which would typically negate overtime for less than 40 hours “worked” according to the town’s personnel policies.

**Memorial Hall** – The Board had authorized going out to bid on two projects. Bob Dean, of FRCOG, will be getting the bids out. Andrew said he had heard from Senator Paul Mark who had included an earmark in the bond bill for $250,000 for Memorial Hall. The next step will be to lobby the Governor to include the earmark in the 2025 capital improvement plan. If the funding is received the renovation could move on to Phase 3.

**Police Department** – Residents are reminded that the winter parking ban is in effect. They should watch for the blue lights at either end of the village. Andrew suggested that in addition to all the other ways of notifying residents about the parking ban, perhaps a notice could be placed on the Over the Falls cable calendar. A car recently crashed into a Main Street house. The driver was taken to the hospital. Police and fire responded to the scene. The homeowner was uninjured. Two cars have been stolen and damaged recently. Residents are reminded to lock their cars.

**Mohawk Personnel Subcommittee** – Rick met again with the subcommittee, which discussed the paraprofessionals contract. It was an executive session so there are no details to report except that a meeting with the paraprofessionals has been set up.

**Appointments:**

**5:45 pm John Wheeler, Will Flanders, Paul Hollings, Susan Durkee Planning Board RE: Proposed Bylaw Changes** – As a quorum of the Planning Board was present, this had been posted as a Planning Board meeting. John called the Planning Board meeting to order at 5:45 pm. The planners were seeking feedback from the Selectboard on four proposed bylaws. It was noted that a newer version of the short-term rental bylaw had been created, but it was not significantly different from the version distributed to the Selectboard.

**Short Term Rental Bylaw** – Tricia asked if the Town Clerk and Board of Health were aware that they would be involved in this bylaw. Paul said they were aware and that Health Agent Randy Crochier thought the Shelburne bylaw could be a model for other towns. Tricia did not like the word “timely” in regard to correcting violations. Will said the word allowed some flexibility in correcting issues, depending on what those issues were. Tricia asked how many residents with existing short-term rentals would be affected by the new bylaw. Paul said there are around 40 such units now and those would be grandfathered. Andrew said he understood the intent was to prevent non-owner-occupied short-term rentals but he felt that needed to be made clearer. Rick suggested requiring owners to explain the town’s winter parking ban. He also felt that it should be made clear that the ZBA was the SPGA.

**Mobile Food Establishments** – This will be a general bylaw not a zoning bylaw. Tricia suggested changing the operating hours from 8 am to 8 pm to 7 am to 9 pm. Fees for registration will be up to the Selectboard to decide. Tricia would also like to see a mention of trash disposal, use of tables, signage, and pedestrian and vehicular safety. Andrew said, at the present time, there is only one MFE in town and it appears that under the proposed bylaw another like it would not be allowed, although it is understood that the current MFE will be grandfathered. Will agreed that the proposed bylaw would not allow another MFE like the existing one, saying that he would not want to see every empty lot in town ending up with a temporary building. Will added that the bylaw would also apply to mobile homes and non-wheeled temporary buildings. Food trucks will need to be permitted by the Selectboard and the number of permits issued will be up to that Board. Rick suggested clarifying the permit process by listing the steps involved.

**Battery Storage Bylaw** – The ZBA had suggested that this bylaw be modeled after the existing telecommunications bylaw. Like telecommunications facilities, battery storage facilities cannot be prohibited, but towns can regulate them to some degree. This bylaw was modeled after one from the town of Oakham, which had been approved by the AG’s office. Tricia had quite a few suggestions including adding language to attempt to minimize environmental damage in the future and requiring, not suggesting, that a facility should be surrounded by a six-foot chain link fence. Rick suggested clarifying the order of the steps for applying for a permit.

Will expressed his concern about the process of bonds that are required for various large projects and his fear that the bonds would not cover the actual decommissioning. It was agreed that studying the bond process would be a future project.

**Accessory Dwelling Units** – John explained that essentially the existing ADU bylaw was being replaced by the new rules recently issued by the state. Discussion was held on the parking requirement and on curb cuts. It was decided to use the language provided by the state for those things.

The Planning Board will be meeting on January 7 and will update the bylaws and send the updated version to the Selectboard. It was noted that the short-term rental bylaw should be split into a zoning bylaw and a general bylaw.

At 7:14 pm a motion was made by Will, seconded by Paul, to adjourn the Planning Board meeting. The vote in favor was unanimous.

**Old Business:** None.

**New** **Business:**

**Mileage Reimbursement Rate Change Request** – It had been suggested that the town change its mileage reimbursement rate to be in line with the IRS standard mileage reimbursement of 70¢ per mile. The town currently reimburses at 45¢ per mile. A motion was put forth by Tricia to approve the mileage reimbursement increase from the current 45¢ per mile to the IRS standard of 70¢ per mile. This was seconded by Andrew. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes; Tricia – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Any Other Business:** None.

**Next Meeting** – The next Board meeting will be on January 13, at 5:30 pm via Zoom.

**Correspondence:** None.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Adjournment**: At 7:17 pm a motion was made by Andrew to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Tricia. Roll call vote: Tricia – yes; Andrew – yes; Rick – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Faye Whitney, Recording Secretary